REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action dated February 22, 2008. Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 3-16 have been rejected. Claim 1 has been amended to further define the scope and novelty of the present invention, in view of the Examiner's comments, in order to place the claims in condition for allowance. New claim 17 has been added. Support for the amendments to the claim 1 is found on page 3, lines 9-10, and support for the amendments to the claim 17 is found on page 3, lines 17-21. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been presented. Claims 5-16 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-4, and 17 are pending. Also, the Title and Abstract have been amended to reflect the cancellations to the claims. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Examiner Stated:

> **Claims 1 and 3-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lada et al. (US 7,269,746) ...**

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections. As noted above, claims 5-16 have been canceled. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections with respect to these claims are now moot.

The present invention provides a method for automatically determining a configuration of an I/O connector panel coupled to a system. In accordance with

one embodiment of the present invention, the method includes providing information about the capabilities of the I/O connector panel to a memory within the I/O connector panel, prior to connecting one or more peripherals to the I/O connector panel, wherein the I/O connector panel provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system. The method further includes examining the information in the memory. The method further includes downloading at least one driver to the system coupled to the I/O connector panel based upon the examined information. Lada does not teach or suggest these features, as discussed below.

Lada discloses a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or handheld device comprising a main unit and an option pack, wherein the option pack stores all of the application software and drivers. Upon insertion, the hardware interface invokes a device manager on the main unit that interrogates a memory device on the option pack. The interrogation includes data on drivers, applications, configuration and miscellaneous requirements of the option pack. This identification process allows the option pack to store information, drivers and applications on the option pack, so the main unit does not have to use its memory to store information on a large number of option packs. Once the option pack and its applications are identified, the device manager on the main unit retrieves the applications and drivers from a separate memory device on the option pack and downloads the applications and drivers onto the main unit. Upon de-installation of the option pack from the main unit, the applications and drivers are removed from the main unit. (Abstract.)

However, Lada also does not teach or suggest "providing information about the capabilities of the I/O connector panel to a memory within the I/O connector panel, prior to connecting one or more peripherals to the I/O connector panel, wherein the I/O connector panel provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system," as recited in amended independent claim 1. The Examiner has referred to column 14, lines 52-55, and column 16, lines 7-10 of Lada as disclosing the information providing step. However, column 14, lines 52-55, of Lada as discloses information about an option pack that connects to a main unit. In contrast to Lada, the I/O connector panel of the present invention provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system. The option pack of Lada is analogous to an I/O device, but the option pack of Lada does not connect to the main unit via an I/O connector panel. As such, providing information about the option pack of Lada is different from providing information about the I/O connector panel of the present invention. Column 14, lines 52-55, and column 16, lines 7-10 of Lada also describes information about the option pack.

Furthermore, Lada fails to teach or suggest providing information about the capabilities of the I/O connector panel to a memory within the I/O connector panel, "prior to connecting one or more peripherals to the I/O connector panel," as recited in amended independent claim 1. The Examiner has referred generally to column 21, lines 1-20 of Lada as disclosing this feature. However, this section of Lada merely shows a table with a slot configuration. There is no mention of providing information "prior to connecting one or more peripherals to

the I/O connector panel," as in the present invention. Referring to column 16, lines 7-10, of Lada, information about the option pack is downloaded "upon insertion of the option pack 12." Even though the option pack of Lada is different from the I/O connector panel of the present invention, the exchange of information occurs after insertion, which teaches away from the present invention, where information is provided before connection.

Therefore, Lada does not teach or suggest the combination of steps as recited in amended independent claim 1, and this claim thus allowable over Lada.

Dependent claims

Dependent claims 3-4 depend from amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to amended independent claim 1 apply with equal force to claims 3-4, which are thus allowable over the cited reference for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New claim 17

New claim 17 recites "wherein the information comprises attributes of a type of the I/O connector panel, each connector installed on the I/O connector panel, and attributes of connector logic that links the I/O connector panel to the system." Lada does not teach or suggest these features. As indicated above, instead of providing information about an I/O connector that provides a connection point between I/O devices and the system, Lada describes

information about an "option pack," which is analogous to an I/O device. The option pack of Lada connects directly to the main unit (column 3, lines 38-39) without an I/O connector panel as in the present invention. As such, it would not make sense for Lada to provide information such "type of the I/O connector panel, each connector installed on the I/O connector panel, and attributes of connector logic that links the I/O connector panel to the system." Therefore, claim 17 is allowable over Lada for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' attorney believes this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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